

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA PEPTALKS MEXICAN DELEGATES TO WOMEN'S
CONFERENCE; MORE DELEGATIONS ARRIVE

1. ON THE EVE OF WOMEN YEAR CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA REITERATED TO LARGE (65 MEMBER) MEXICAN DELEGATION HIS VIEWS ON SIGNIFICANCE AND FOCUS OF MEETING. "THERE WILL BE VOICES," HE WARNED, "WHICH WILL SEEK TO DIVERT ATTENTION TO THE SCANDALOUS AND THE EXTRAVAGANT AND (SUBJECT) WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF WOMEN." HE REPEATED A PREVIOUSLY PUBLICIZED VIEW THAT "NO WOMAN IS MORE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST THAN THE ONE WHOSE ECONOMIC SITUATION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HER TO PROVIDE BREAD, MEDICAL ATTENTION AND MEDICINE, AND SCHOOLING FOR HER CHILDREN." HE EXPECTED MANY PROBLEMS TO RECEIVE DELEGATES' ATTENTION, BUT HE THOUGHT THAT "...IN THE CONTRAST BETWEEN POOR AND RICH COUNTRIES, WHAT IS MOST DAMAGING IS THAT MANY PROBLEMS CANNOT BE RESOLVED BECAUSE OF THE UNJUST DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH IN THE WORLD, BECAUSE OF THE UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK, BECAUSE OF THE SUB-

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SIDY (PAID BY) THREE-QUARTERS OF HUMANITY TO ONE-FOURTH OF

THE WORLD'S POPULATION." IF THE CONFERENCE REALLY WISHES TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, ECHEVERRIA FELT, "WE MUST THINK OF THE NECESSITY TO ESTABLISH... AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ORDER A LITTLE NEARER TO WHAT WE CONSIDER FITTING AND JUST..." COMMENT: CLEARLY ECHEVERRIA HAS NOT SWERVED AN INCH FROM HIS INITIAL CONCEPT OF THE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AS PRIMARILY A PLATFORM FOR ADVANCING THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC POSITIONS.

2. AMONG DELEGATES ARRIVING IN MEXICO CITY ON JUNE 17 WERE MRS. PATRICIA HUTAR OF THE US, MRS. JYHAN EL SADAT OF EGYPT, AND MRS. LEAH RABIN OF ISRAEL. MRS. RABIN ATTRACTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN THE PRESS WITH HER REPORTED STATEMENTS THAT WARS COULD BE PREVENTED IF WOMEN HAD MORE PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE. ASKED, IF THIS WERE TRUE, HOW IT HAPPENED THAT GOLDA MEIR AS PRIME MINISTER LED ISRAEL DURING A WAR, MRS. RABIN REPLIED THAT MRS. MEIR HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONSULT WITH A CABINET CONSISTING OF 18 OR 19 MEN." SHIFTING HER GROUND SOMEWHAT SHE ASSERTED THAT ALL ISRAELIS DESIRE PEACE AND THAT HAD IT BEEN SOLELY UP TO ISRAEL, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO WAR. MRS. SADAT, WHEN INTERVIEWED, DISCOUNTED PROSPECTS OF ANOTHER MID-EAST CONFLICT, SAYING "WE ARE ALL WORKING FOR PEACE."

3. REPORTERS ON JUNE 17 ALSO FOCUSED UPON GLORIA STEINEM ("AMERICAN WOMEN ARE NOT LIBERATED") AND XIMENA ORTUZAR (CHILEAN EXILE JOURNALIST), WHO CHARGED THAT 49 CHILEAN JOURNALISTS ARE THE OBJECT OF HARASSMENT AND TORTURE BY THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT.
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